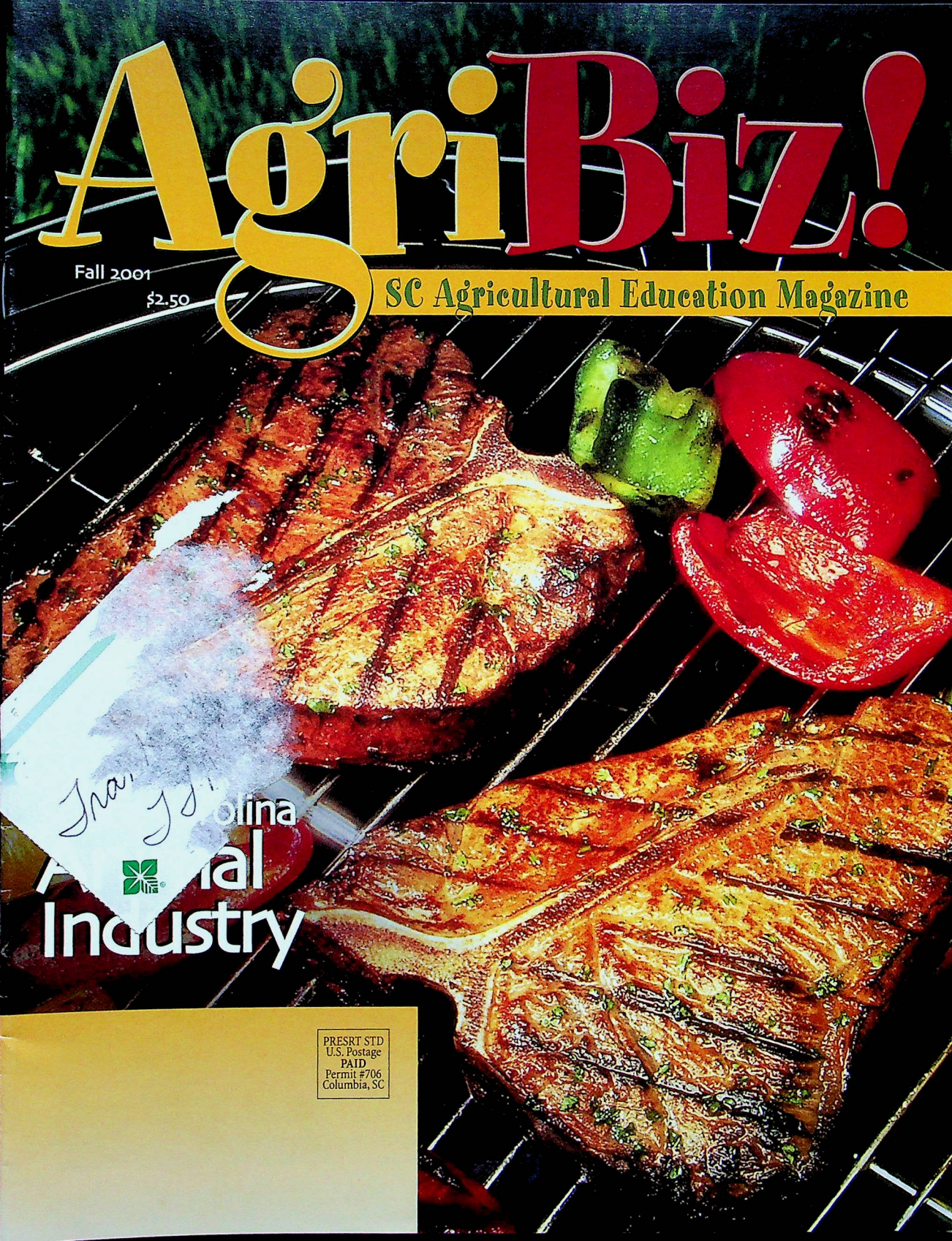
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Fall 2001

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SC Agricultural Education Magazine



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Cover Photo:
Grilling steaks on the patio is a favorite activity for many South Carolinians. Photo provided by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

South Carolina's Animal Industry And Agricultural Education

The animal industry is a major part of South Carolina's agriculture. In this issue we are spotlighting the animal industry and food... with information on the product from the farm to the grocery store, the restaurant or the family dining table.

Most agricultural education departments in South Carolina high schools along with Tri-County Technical College and Clemson University offer courses in animal science. The animal industry offers a number of interesting and rewarding career opportunities. (See article on Tri-County Technical College's Veterinary Technology degree – page 13).

Increasing numbers of FFA members are exhibiting livestock in fairs and shows. The students are learning about the animal industry as they win championship titles and college scholarships in shows at the local, state, regional and national level. (See the article on FFA members winning State Fair Scholarships and the one entitled "There Is More To Showing Livestock Than Winning A Blue Ribbon." – page 6)

A number of South Carolina FFA and Young Farmer-Agribusiness members hold important leadership positions in the animal industry at the state and national levels. (See article on Iris Peeler – page 12)

Thanks to all of the specialists and educators who contributed articles or photographs to this issue of AgriBiz.

Visit the SC Agricultural Education Web Page at **www.ffasc.org**

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The Largest Segment Of U.S. Agricultural Economy

Beef Production

In the United States the domestic beef industry is very diverse. Operations vary based on climate, geography, and resources. Beef production is responsible for more than 186,000 full time jobs on farms and ranches. These jobs support 1.37 million jobs throughout the rest of the industry.

In 1999 there were $36.5 billion worth of cattle sold. The herd inventory was 99.1 million cattle and over $55 billion worth of beef was consumed.

In South Carolina there are approximately 480,000 head on 19,600 operations and beef production is the second largest of the state's animal agricultural industries. Beef cattle operations exist in all 46 counties and the average herd size is around 24.

South Carolina is primarily a cow-calf state in that most producers own brood cows and market feeder calves; however, there has recently been a renewed interest in stockering or backgrounding calves, which involves growing feeder calves until they reach a suitable weight to enter a feedlot. There are a few cattle feeding operations in the state, but for the most part our climate is not suitable for large scale cattle feeding. Most operations are forage-based and rely on our long growing season and mild climate to produce most of the feed consumed by the cow herd. Depending on the location in the state, most producers use either warm season perennials, cool season perennials or a combination of the two. Some producers plant annuals and utilize crop residue from row cropping to supplement the feed for their herd.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) is the organization that represents all the facets of beef production, with special emphasis placed on policy and legislative issues. The Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB) oversees the disbursement of check-off dollars for research, promotion and education as it relates to beef nutrition and consumption.



Soy Glazed Filet Mignons



Grecian Beef Top Loin Steak & Mushroom Kabobs

Two similar organizations in South Carolina that serve producers are the SC Cattlemen's Association and the SC Beef Board. The Cattlemen's organization represents producers in matters such as regulations and legislation. The Beef Board serves in the same capacity as the National Board and is responsible for in-state marketing, education and research projects.

Cattle production is viewed as a sustainable agricultural endeavor that efficiently converts low quality plant material into a humanly useable protein. Cattle can graze land that is often not suitable for cropping or other uses and make use of otherwise an unusable resource. Cattle production is also an environmentally friendly practice. Beef is the product of cattle production. It is a nutrient dense protein source that fits in to most all lifestyles and provides such things as iron, zinc, and the B-complex vitamins as well as many other micro-nutrients.

by Brian Bolt
Executive Director, SC Cattlemen's Association, Anderson, SC

Photographs provided by National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

The Stephenson Farm

An Impressive Agricultural Success Story





Top: Ronnie Stephenson with granddaughter Amanda. Below: He points to some of the latest technology in his new milking parlor.

The family farm is alive and well near Lowrys, South Carolina. Ronnie and Susan Stephenson and their family are proof that a family farming operation can survive and thrive in a competitive market.

The Stephenson Farm consists of 1,300 acres of pasture and hay land, 500 dairy and 300 beef cattle along with a turkey operation producing 480,000 birds annually. "We try to keep this a family business," said Stephenson. "My son, Ron, manages the turkey operation." His wife, Teri, feeds out 200 to 300 steers each year. Daughter, Mary Jo Jolley, feeds calves on weekends. "I also have several cousins and an uncle who help out. Altogether, we have about ten employees and all of them are from our community.

"My wife and mother prepare lunch for all of the farm staff, but its amazing how visitors tend to stop by around noon almost every day," Stephenson said. "We don't mind. We are a very close community."

The farm, operated for more than 65 years by the Stephenson family, is flourishing under Ronnie's leadership. "The key to success is a good labor force and proper financial management," he says. "We believe in keeping our debt load down, so we can stay competitive."

Ronnie was recognized as the Outstanding Farmer in the Southeast in 1994 at the Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition near Moultrie, Georgia. "It was great to receive such a prestigious award, but it was also a tribute to my family and staff," he said.

Ronnie's father grew cotton and ran a small dairy. "It was hard work when I was growing up. I was not sure I wanted to take over the farming operation," said Ronnie. It was not until he enrolled in the Chester High School Agriculture Education program, under the leadership of John W. Parris, that his interest in farming was kindled. "My experiences in agricultural education and the FFA gave me the confidence to succeed as a farmer." Those experiences brought him back to the farm after a brief time in the military. He continues to support the Chester High School Agricultural Education Program as an active member of the Young Farmer and Agribusiness Chapter.

"We have to keep learning. It is important to know what technology is working for others in agriculture and apply it to our operation," he said. After observing the operation of an out-of-state dairy farmer, Stephenson completely renovated his milking facilities. "Efficiency is the key to success. The quicker the cows get in and out of the milking parlor the better," he said.

Stephenson's new milking facility features the latest in technology, including a pneumatic crowd gate which automatically "pushes" the animals into the milking stalls. It also has a double twelve parallel rapid exit system, which allows the release of twelve cows at one time, and a basement that houses all of the electronic controls. This efficient dairy operation produces 30,000 pounds of milk per day.

The Stephenson Farm is a modern-day success story – a thriving, profitable enterprise. "We have been fortunate," says Stephenson. "This is a tough business but we seem to be doing well."

by Billy Keels,
State Executive Director, SC Young Farmer and Agribusiness Association and Regional Coordinator for Agricultural Education, Florence, SC.

Changes In S.C. Pork Production



Pork production in South Carolina has changed dramatically in the last ten years. Farms are larger, but thousands fewer than in past years. Today's pork producers are marketing a higher quality product on a consistent basis. There were 483,000 pigs produced in South Carolina in 1999, down from 880,000 in 1970 and over 1 million in 1929. Seven hundred farming operations were producing pork in 1999, down from 1300 in 1997, and 21,000 in the 1970's.

Exciting challenges for employment or ownership in the pork industry are many. There will be opportunities for independently owned herds where producers take advantage of modern technical advances and produce lean, efficient, healthy animals. There will be many opportunities within the integrated industry for field staff and technical support. It is imperative that a future workforce, trained in environmental protection techniques, be available to support this vibrant food producing industry.

Keeping abreast of environmental issues and technical advances in pork production is a challenge for high school agricultural education departments and Young Farmer and Agribusiness Chapters. Extracurricular activities such as livestock evaluation competitions and performance tested market animal shows encourage change and highlight progress.

Four factors have resulted in dramatic changes in the pork production industry.

1. **Pork production** is an integrated industry, with vertical integration often beginning with the packer, through the contract production industry to the producer. Since all of the genetic material and feed manufacturing in these systems are controlled by the central production company, each farm unit produces market animals with consistently high quality carcasses.

2. **Lending institutions** favor contract pork production. This preference is the result of the success in the payback rate of loans by producers. Several logical functions of the contract system make this a reality. These include:
 (a) High quality genetics for feed conversion and carcass quality.
 (b) Technical support from trained field agents.
 (c) Marketing is a function of the integrator, not the producer.
 (d) Payments are made to the producer for production performance, not as a result of fluctuating markets.
 (e) Systematic help with animal health.

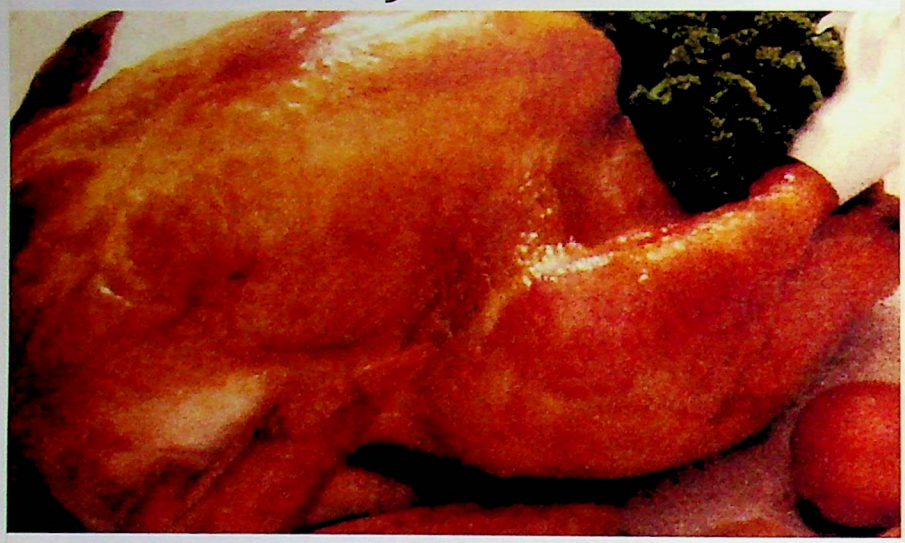
3. **The southeast** has an excess of pigs born compared to the slaughter volume. Producers with small herd size and variable carcass quality cannot compete for shackle space with the large integrated producers. This is especially true do to the longterm contractual agreements that many integrated production systems have with packers. When supply becomes surplus, producers that market through the spot market must settle for lower prices and delays in delivery dates.

4. **Great pressure** has been brought to bear on confined livestock production by parties that represent environmental issues. This has been especially true for the pork industry. Producers must complete 7 hours of confined animal manure management training and pass an examination in order to maintain a waste management permit.

by Dr. John E. Albrecht
Extension Animal Scientist, Clemson University

Poultry

First In Animal Agriculture In SC



Poultry accounts for 40 percent of the animal industry sales in South Carolina.



Turkey production has tripled since 1970 due to the versatility as it is processed into cuts, parts and other products.

The turkey industry is a vertically integrated industry that relies on contract producers to grow the birds.

The per capita consumption of turkey is 17.5 pounds. Turkey is the fourth choice of meat by consumers, surpassed only by chicken, beef and pork.

SC ranks ninth in turkey production in the nation, producing 7.1 million turkeys annually.

South Carolina ranks twelfth in the nation in boiler production, growing more than 190 million birds annually. Per capita consumption of chicken is about 72 pounds.

South Carolina ranks in the top 20 states in egg production, more than 110 million dozen eggs are sold annually from farms in the state.

by Dr. Mickey Hall,
Associate Professor, Animal and Veterinary Sciences Department, Clemson University

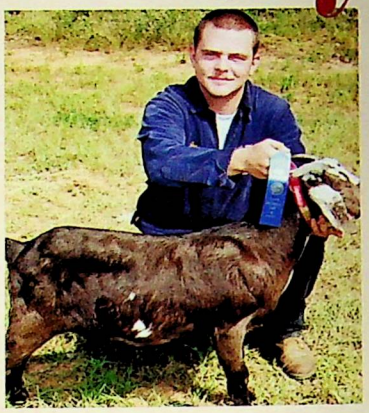
Laurens FFA Member Raises Emu



Bryan Armstrong, Laruens FFA member, produces and markets Emu. He received a Gold rating in the National FFA-sponsored Specialty Animal Production Proficiency Award for 2001.

His future plans are to open a large animal clinic after college and eventually become a veterinarian.

South Carolina's Goat Industry



Justin Wilson

On a worldwide basis, more goat meat is consumed than beef. The meat type Boer Goat, developed in South Africa, produces a heavier carcass than traditional breeds.

The SC Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Census of 1997, reports 27,153 goats with 9,191 sold. This is a doubling of the goat population in five years. Some livestock markets in the state report selling 500 or more goats in a week.

FFA members involved in the industry-sponsored goat project are doing well. Josh Waters, Gilbert FFA, was the state winner in 2000 and Justin Wilson, Crescent FFA, placed second in the state this year and third in a recent Southeastern Goat Showmanship Competition.

For more information on the goat industry in South Carolina contact Dr. Howard van Dijk, Area Animal Scientist, Clemson Extension Service – (803) 788-5700.

Animal Science And Agricultural Education

Course offerings provide high school agricultural education departments tremendous flexibility and opportunities, especially in Animal Science studies.

Livestock Management, Equine Science, Small Animal Care and AgriScience courses provide students a challenging and rewarding curriculum. These courses provide students excellent opportunities for on-the-job placement while in high school and preparation for post secondary education. Students have a wide range of career choices as well as life long learning skills available to them through these courses.

Many students develop outstanding projects to include show cattle that contribute to scholarship and employment offers.

The course Livestock Management provides technical knowledge and skill for occupations in the industry or the veterinarian fields. This course includes animal nutrition, health, selection, physiology, housing, reproduction, handling and marketing. Hands-on experience with beef and dairy cattle, swine and poultry are included in addition to personal and community activities. This course has a high interest level with students and offers great potential for articulation with several post secondary schools. It provides an opportunity for students to learn the principles involved in fitting and showing of livestock and skills of carcass evaluation to USDA standards. Many students develop outstanding projects to include show cattle that contribute to scholarship and employment offers.

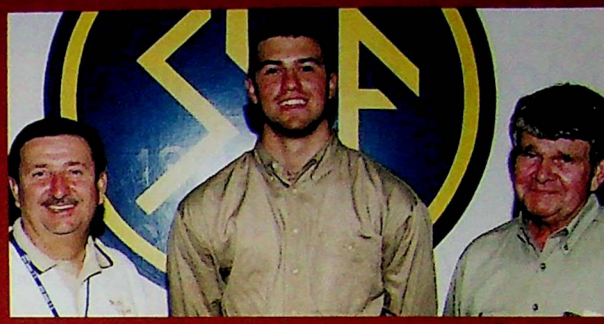
Students who successfully complete the specific animal science instruction can "test out" of courses at Clemson University.

An added caveat of this curriculum is the possibility of earning college credit while in high school. Students who successfully complete the specific animal science instruction can "test out" of courses at Clemson University. A college course such as *Introduction to Animal Industries* can be taught through a rigorous animal science major at the high school level. Students may also take advantage of this opportunity through other post secondary schools depending on the local articulation agreement.

Animal Science students are also involved in a variety of FFA activities from team career development events to awards based on their supervised agricultural experience. Career Development Events such as Livestock Evaluation, Dairy Cattle Evaluation and Dairy Foods are offered at the state and national level. Students gain experience in interpreting performance data, using industry-based evaluations and developing communication skills. The Animal Science major has wonderful opportunities from ownership to placement, showing to judging and from school laboratory to university research,

For additional information on the Animal Science courses in high schools, contact the Agricultural Education Teacher or the State Leader, Agricultural Education at Clemson University: 864-656-3301.

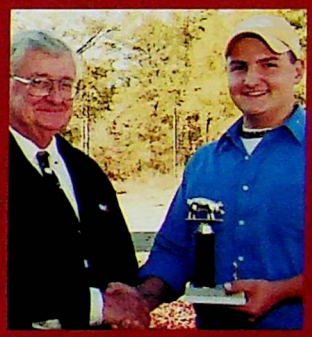
by Tommy Gladden
State Leader, Agricultural Education



Matthew Burns, Pendleton FFA and Clemson University freshman, was awarded a $2,500 college scholarship by the State Fair in the Beef Cattle category. Gary Goodman, General Manager of the State Fair (left) and Dr. Gene Cornett, President, SC Cattlemen's Association (right).



Davis Peeler, Crescent FFA, won a $2,000 State Fair Scholarship in th Dairy Cattle Category, with Lt. Gov. Bob Peeler (left) and Dr. Tom Dobbins, Superintendent of the Livestock Dept., SC State Fair and an assistant professor of Agricultural Education at Clemson (right).



Wesley Hall, Chesterfield FFA, won the $1,500 State Fair Scholarship in the Swine Category. With him is Olin Coskrey, FFA advisor.



Amanda McGee, Crescent FF won a $2,500 State Fair Scholarship for overall achievement in academics an extra-curricular activities.



Ryan Keith, a member of the York FFA Chapter, was presented the Fred E. Pardue Showmanship Award by the State Fair. With him is Lt. Governor Bob Peeler (center) and William Hair.

Showing Livestock: More Than Winning A Blue Ribbon

Agricultural Education teachers are constantly exploring new avenues for students that promote growth, leadership and successful supervised agricultural experience programs. A livestock project encompasses all of these goals.

According to the South Carolina State Fair, participants in the Junior Livestock Exhibits have increased by more than 40 percent over the past two years.

One reason for this growth is because parents and teachers are looking for activities that will promote family values and build character in their children. It has been found that livestock projects can and will promote family values and build character in the participants.

A recent study at Texas Tech indicates that a livestock project promotes not only competition, but life skills as well.

The following traits are developed through livestock projects: responsibility, work ethic, decision-making skills, & sportsmanship.

Students learn responsibility while raising an animal whose life is totally dependent on their decisions. Also, by raising and caring for an animal for competition, a student will be more likely to develop a strong work ethic. According to the study, exhibitors are required to make determinations as minor as how to hold the animal or as complex as the health status of the animal. It is in the show ring, however, that young people learn how to win with humility or accept defeat with grace. The importance of family was the third major theme to emerge from the study. The overall experience of exhibiting and showing livestock necessarily involves the family. Competition helps the entire family work toward a common goal.

Exposure to that competition is the fourth major item identified by the study. While livestock shows always have a first and last place exhibitor, participants who finish far from first might still feel a sense of accomplishment. For example, just receiving a ribbon might be a satisfactory result to a first-time exhibitor.

Livestock projects help students develop a strong Supervised Agricultural Experience Program (SAE). They learn new things such as purchasing feed and materials. It is important that students keep accurate records to realize a profit or a loss. This knowledge will also help them make well informed decisions.

A livestock project is about learning to live in a competitive world, not about winning a blue ribbon.

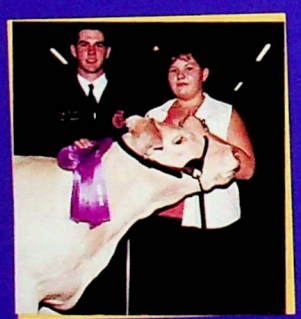
by Dr. Tom Dobbins,
Assistant Professor, Agricultural Education Clemson University



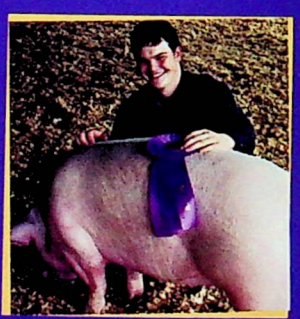
Katie Miskelly, York FFA Member.



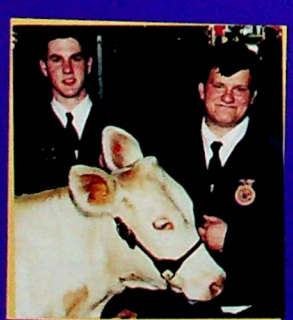
Peter Wilkins, Blacksburg FFA.



Amy Williams, West Oak FFA Chapter, with State FFA President Kyle Hatcher.



Andy Burdette, member of the RD Anderson Technology Center FFA Chapter.

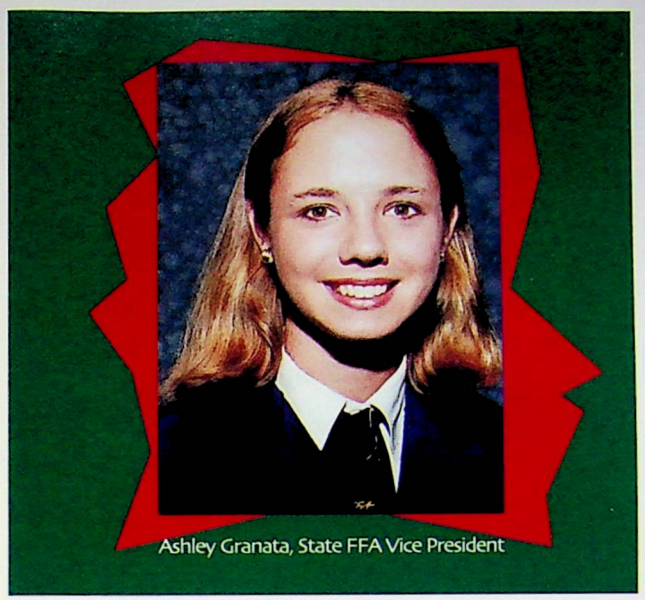


Matthew Lutton, Crescent FFA Chapter, with State FFA President Kyle Hatcher.



Hannah Thompson, Woodmont FFA Member.

National FFA Week


Ashley Granata, State FFA Vice President

College Scholarships Available Through The National FFA

National FFA Week is February 16-23, 2002, and the theme is "FFA Makes It Real." Members and their advisors will plan and carry out events to build awareness of the importance of agricultural education and to gain support for the FFA. This special observance is held during the week of George Washington's birthday in recognition and appreciation of his leadership and commitment to agriculture. The FFA colors of National Blue and Corn Gold continues to inspire unity of purpose among the nearly one-half million members across America.

It is time to complete an application for a scholarship awarded by the National FFA Organization in concert with hundreds of cooperating sponsors. Each year the National FFA Organization awards $1.8 million in scholarships ranging in value from $500 to $5000 to hundreds of FFA members. The deadline for applying for these scholarships is February 15, 2002. Eight South Carolina FFA members were awarded a scholarship this year, including Matthew Burns, *Pendleton*; Leah McDuffie, *Latta*; Kyle Hatcher, *Crescent*; Stephanie Moore, *Travelers Rest*; William Nance, *York*; Terry Sanford, *Walhalla*; and Derek Simpson and Drew Simpson of *Crescent*. For more details on the scholarship program contact the National FFA Organization web page at www.ffa.org

Nationals Visit Schools


Eric Hill, State FFA Secretary

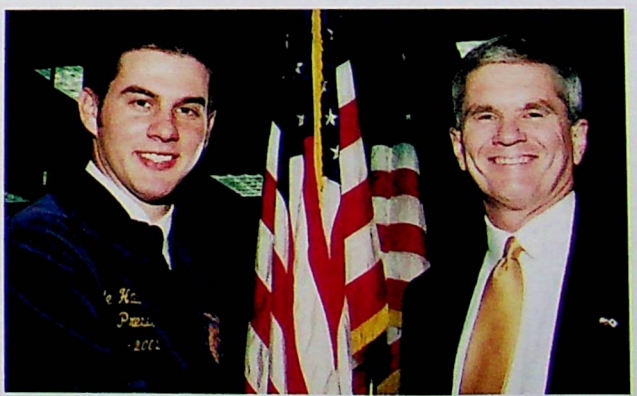
National FFA Vice Presidents Abbie Kammerzell from Washington and Barrett Keene from Florida, will visit Fort Mill, Indian Land, Pageland Central, Cheraw, Darlington, Manning, Gilbert, Lexington Technology Center, Union, Daniel Morgan Technology Center, R.D. Anderson Technology Center, Travelers Rest, Hillcrest and West Oak FFA Chapters January 28- February 1.

They will spend one day in Columbia with State Legislators, other State and Federal Government leaders and agri-business leaders and will conduct Leadership Seminars at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center and at other schools. They will also visit Clemson University, hosted by the Clemson University Collegiate FFA Organization to meet University officials.

Perdue Addresses Groups


Jennifer Perdue State FFA Vice President

Jennifer Perdue addressed the annual conference of the National Association of Rural Rehabilitation Corporations in Charleston, SC. The SC Rural Rehabilitation Corporation is a major sponsor of the SC FFA Chapter Recognition Program. She also addressed the State Cooperative Council's summer meeting in Florence. She was accompanied by Alexander McLeod, President of the McBee FFA Chapter. The Council is also a major sponsor of the SC FFA Association.


Clemson President James Barker addressed the State FFA Luncheon at the State Fair. He is shown here with Kyle Hatcher, State FFA President.

Highlights of National FFA Convention

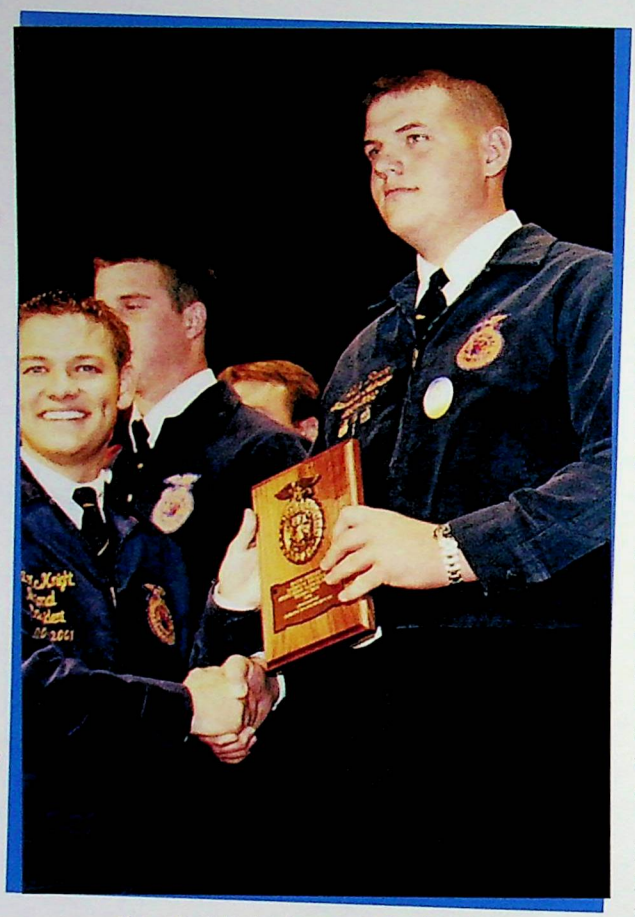
More than 46,000 FFA members and guests attended the 74th National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky in October, among them 418 members, advisors and guests from South Carolina.

The convention keynote address was by Dick Vitale, an ABC & ESPN Sports Analyst, who challenged the members to believe in themselves, set goals and determine to achieve. He received thunderous ovations by the capacity-filled auditorium audience as he shared his messages through humor and personal experiences. Other speakers included Ann Veneman, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

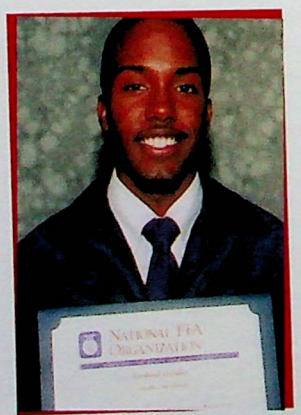
A dynamic convention theme video "FFA Makes it Real" was used at the opening of the sessions. The video highlighted FFA members from Aiken and Manning Chapters in South Carolina, which was one of the two states selected for the production of the video.

State FFA Vice President Ashley Granata accepted a plaque which recognized the South Carolina FFA Association for a 14 percent increase in membership over the previous year.

South Carolina FFA members competing in the National FFA Career Development Finals included individuals: Michael Haynes, Indian Land, Public Speaking; Jennifer Perdue, Extemporaneous Public Speaking, McBee; Hannah Thompson, Creed Speaking, Woodmont; Emily Waggoner, Dairy Handlers, Pendleton; and teams: Calhoun Falls, Agricultural Issues; Wagener-Salley, Agricultural Mechanics; Travelers Rest, Dairy Cattle Evaluation; Pendleton, Dairy Foods; Calhoun Falls, Environmental and Natural Resources; Lexington, Floriculture; Strom Thurmond, Forestry; Laurens, Horse Evaluation; Crescent, Livestock Evaluation; Lexington, Nursery-Landscape; Manning, Parliamentary Procedure; Indian Land, Poultry Evaluation; and Britton's Neck, Farm Business Management.



Above: Davis Peeler, Crescent, National Finalist In Proficiency Award



Rashad Pressley, Anderson Technology Center Chapter

Davis Peeler, Crescent FFA Chapter, was recognized as a National Finalist in Diversified Agricultural Production and Rashad Pressley, Anderson Technology Center, was a National Finalist in Landscape Management.

Four South Carolina FFA members including Eddie Claxton, Anderson; Franklin Davis, Britton's Neck; Ashley Dickerson, West Oak; and Jeffrey Whisenhunt, Edisto, received the coveted American FFA Degree.

Five South Carolinians were awarded the Honorary American FFA Degree including State Representative Ronald Townsend, Anderson; Jerry Holley, McBee; Kenneth Lake, Lexington; Frank Sandifer, York; and Richard Ward, Darlington, who could not attend the convention.

Dr. Curtis White, Associate Professor of Agricultural Education at Clemson University, was named the National Winner of the H.O. Sargent Award designed to recognize outstanding individuals who make valuable contributions in the promotion and support of diversity in Agricultural Education and the FFA at the local, state and national level.

The Aiken FFA Chapter earned the Three Star Gold Emblem award in the National Chapter Recognition Program. Belton-Honea Path, Central, Edisto, Latta, McBee, and Wagener-Salley Chapters received the Two Star Gold Emblem awards.

The Palmetto Breakfast attracted more than 375 FFA members and guests. State Representative Ronnie Townsend and National FFA Executive Secretary Coleman Harris addressed the group.

By Jim Scott, SC FFA Executive Director

American FFA Degree Winners



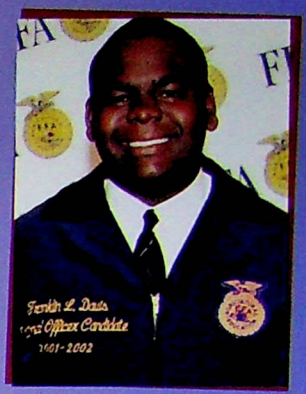
Ashley Dickerson, West Oak



Eddie Claxton, Anderson

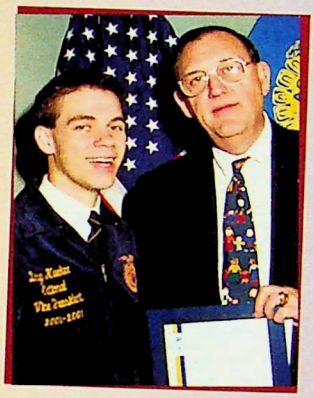


Jeffrey Whisenhunt, Edisto



Franklin Davis, Britton's Neck

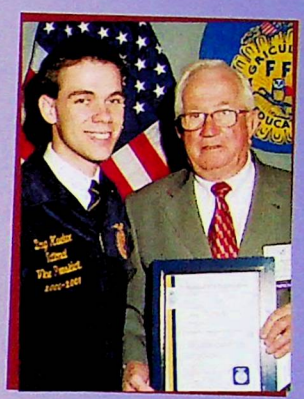
Honorary American FFA Degree Recipients



Representative Ronnie Townsend, Anderson



Kenneth W. Lake, Lexington

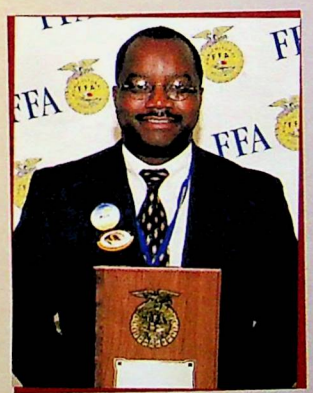


Jerry Holley, McBee



Frank Sandifer, York

National Winner



Dr. Curtis White

National FFA Gold Emblem Chapter



Aiken FFA members (left to right) Alan Canalejo and Courtney Barton with Advisor Joe Wilson.

FFA makes it Real

SC Young Farmer And Agribusiness Association

Sets State Conference In Charleston, SC

by Clark Burrows, President





Photos supplied by Charleston Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.

I attended the South Carolina FFA Convention at Clemson and presented two scholarships to FFA members. I also assisted with the SC Young Farmer-Agribusiness and FFA Golf Tournament which was a big success. We have added a newsletter to keep our members informed of educational opportunities.

The South Carolina Young Farmer and Agribusiness Association Executive Committee set a number of worthy goals for 2001.

MEMBERSHIP: We have surpassed our goal of 1,000 members with our current membership at almost 1,100. Another major accomplishment was the organization of ten new chapters and implementation of the Members and Mentors Program to encourage high school seniors in agricultural education to join our association.

NATIONAL YOUNG FARMER ASSOCIATION: Roger Estridge completed his term as National President by presiding over the National Young Farmer Educational Association Conference near Washington, DC, in December. Edsel Williams, Executive Treasurer of our association from Britton's Neck, SC, was elected National Secretary.

COMMUNICATIONS: The new South Carolina Agricultural Education magazine, *AgriBiz,* highlights Young Farmer and Agribusiness members, and provides other informative articles for our members and supporters. Among the public relations activities I participated in was a meeting with Governor Jim Hodges at the State House and a number of state legislators. We had a substantial increase in Young Farmer and Agribusiness news articles in newspapers and major magazines. I rode in a number of parades including the South Carolina Peach Festival Parade. State Vice President John McGee rode in the South Carolina Apple Festival Parade.

FARM SAFETY: We decided to emphasize safety on the farm and in other agri-businesses. The majority of our workshops at the upcoming state conference will be on safety. These programs will teach safety practices and prepare participants to teach farm safety to other members.

STATE CONFERENCE: The 2002 annual State Conference of our association will be held in Charleston, SC, at the Radisson Hotel, January 18-19. The program begins with a Charleston Harbor Dinner Cruise on Friday evening. The cruise is designed to honor Roger Estridge who has completed a term as National Young Farmer Education Association President. The cruise will offer a three course meal, live entertainment, a cash bar and tremendous views of historic Charleston. We believe this conference format will provide our members excellent opportunities to visit with other agricultural leaders and spend some time relaxing and enjoying good entertainment.

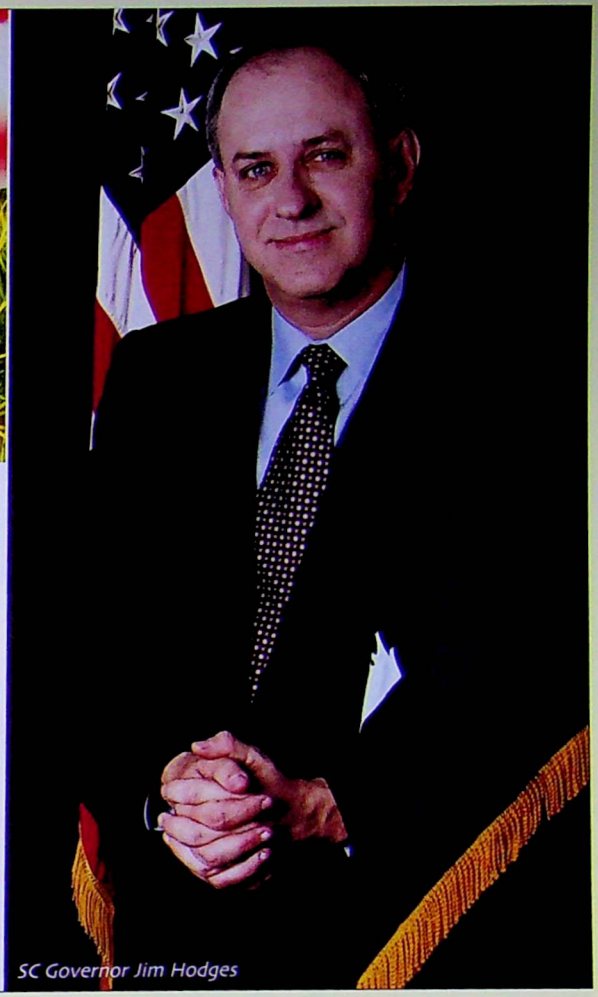
This has been a great year for our association and we have worked diligently to meet our goals. We must have the participation of our members if we are to have a great state conference in historic Charleston. Our conference program is designed to provide educational opportunities and recognition of members who have excelled in farming or agribusiness. The conference is also designed to spotlight agricultural education in our state.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I express my appreciation to all who helped our association meet our goals. We must not rest on our laurels.

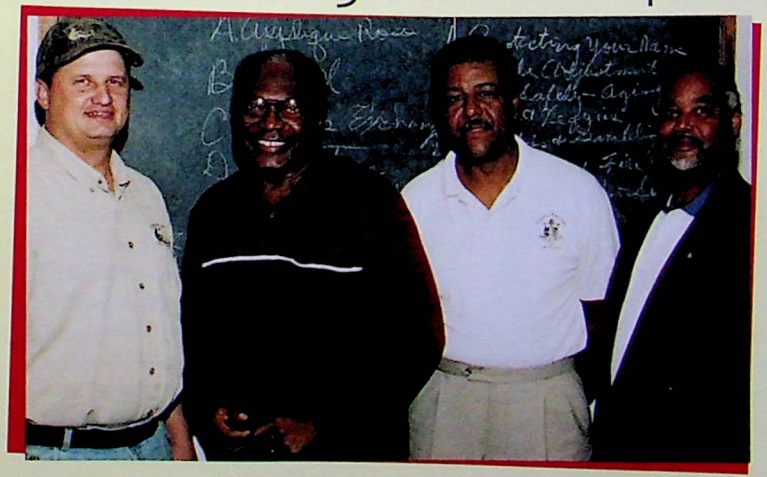


Governor's Summit On Agriculture And Natural Resources

Thursday, February 7, 2002
Pre-Register by January 1, 2002
9am – Pick Up Registration Materials
10am - 7pm – Summit Program
Adam's Mark Hotel
Main & Hampton Streets
Columbia, SC
For additional information and to pre-register, contact Janice Conner, (803) 737-0800 or email: conner@dnr.state.sc.us


SC Governor Jim Hodges

Congressman Jim Clyburn Addresses Orangeburg Young Farmer And Agribusiness Chapter Meeting



Congressman Jim Clyburn of South Carolina's Sixth Congressional District addressed the Orangeburg Young Farmer and Agribusiness Chapter in November. The Congressman discussed the Federal Farm Bill which is being finalized in Washington, DC.

Left to right: John F. Cuttino, President-elect of the SC Young Farmer and Agribusiness Association, Cope, SC; Congressman Jim Clyburn; Melvin Crum, President of the Orangeburg Chapter, Orangeburg; James Ulmer, Agricultural Education Teacher and Young Farmer-Agribusiness Chapter Advisor, Elloree, SC.

AgriBiz Events & Honors



Iris Peeler is president of the American Dairy Science Association – Student Affiliate. A senior at Virginia Tech majoring in Dairy Science, Iris is a member of the Crescent FFA.



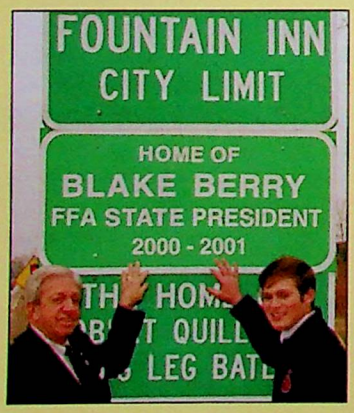
Poinsettia Cultivar Trials At Lexington Technology Center. Lexington FFA members Tim DeCleene, Nic Stratton, State Rep. Charles Sharpe, Wagener, SC, and Leah Lowery. In back: Matt Lewis, Allan Smith, Blake Harlin, State Rep. Larry Koon, Lexington, SC and Scott Croxton at the Poinsettia Field Day.



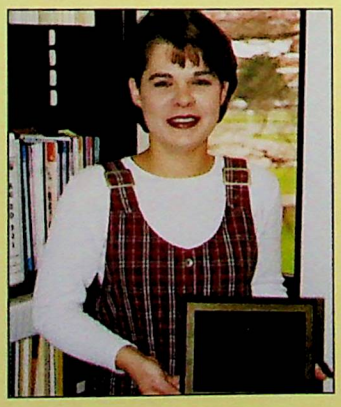
The Travelers Rest FFA Chapter sponsored Farm Day in November. Hundreds attended the event, including State Representatives Harry Cato and Rex Rice. Jason Wigington is the Agricultural Teacher at Travelers Rest High School.



Chesterfield County FFA Chapters sponsored a Government Officials Appreciation Dinner. From left is E.B. Earle, McBee; Jerry Holley, Chairman, School Board, McBee; Pat Earle, FFA Advisor, McBee; State Rep. Mary Beth Freeman, Cheraw; Matt Johnson, Cheraw FFA, State Rep. Jay Lucas, Hartsville; Jennifer Perdue, State FFA Vice President, McBee; and Keri Perdue, Chesterfield FFA member.



Blake Berry, State FFA President, 2000-2001 (right) with Fountain Inn, SC, Mayor Wayne Davis at one of the new signs identifying Fountain Inn, SC, as Blake's hometown. The mayor and city council honored Blake by placing these permanent signs on all of the city limit signs.



Stacy Whitaker, Administrative Specialist in the Office of the State Leader of Agricultural Education at Clemson University, has been recognized as an Outstanding Classified Employee in the College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences for 2001.





Tri-County Technical College:

Offering Degrees In Veterinary Technology

As the trend in veterinary medicine has moved toward multi-doctor practices and high technology, a greater need for well-trained technicians has been created. Tri-County Technical College in Pendleton, SC, is the first technical college in the state to offer an associate degree program in Veterinary Technology.

"There is a huge demand for technicians in the Upstate and nationwide," said Dr. Roseann Marshall, who leads Tri-County's program.

Veterinary technicians work closely with veterinarians and other members of the veterinary team to deliver quality animal health care. Their primary responsibilities in a veterinary practice involve animal nursing, administering medications, assisting in surgery, taking radiographs, inducing and monitoring of anesthesia, hospital management and laboratory duties. Veterinary technicians are also employed in biomedical research, the military, sales, industry and education.

Tri-County's program, launched in the 1970s, is accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association and is endorsed by the South Carolina Association of Veterinarians. It offers training in large and small animal clinical and surgical nursing, various laboratory skills, as well as courses in lab animal technology, office management and computer skills.

In comparison to human medicine, a veterinary technician assumes the combined duties of a registered nurse, a lab technician, a radiology technician, a surgical technician and an anesthesiologist all rolled into one. As a doctor cares for a member of the human species, a veterinary technician will be administering treatment to the rest of the animal kingdom.

Technicians must be trained in a wide variety of situations, such as restraining animals ranging in size from a bird to a cow, assisting in the foaling of a horse or assisting in every day surgical procedures like neutering of a dog or cat.

"Technicians must possess a love of working with animals and a desire to work in the medical field," said Dr. Marshall.

Recent graduates of Tri-County's Veterinary Technology department report a 100 percent passing rate on a national credentialing exam. This test is used by 34 states and provinces for credentialing veterinary technicians and is administered by the Professional Examination Service and prepared by the Veterinary Technician Testing Committee under the direction of the American Association of the Veterinary State Boards.

"Many states, including South Carolina, use the Veterinary Technology National Exam as their written examination for credentialing veterinary technicians," Dr. Marshall said.

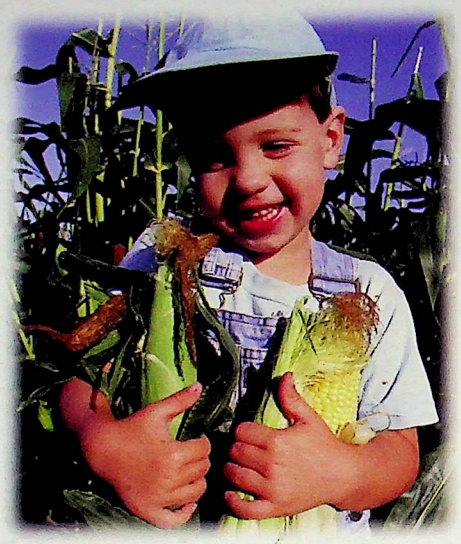
The national exam is a timed test consisting of 200 multiple choice questions that measure the students' knowledge about pharmacology, surgical preparation and assisting, lab procedures, animal nursing, radiology and ultrasound, anesthesia and office and hospital procedures.

A passing score on the national exam allows for increased salaries and a chance to advance in the field, said Dr. Marshall. "It's important that graduates take the exam," she said.

In addition to Tri- County's on-campus program, the College offers the Veterinary Technology program in a distance learning format. Lectures originate on the Tri-County campus and currently are being transmitted to Midlands Technical College via advanced video technology.

For additional information on the Veterinary Technician program at Tri-County Technical College contact Dr. Roseann Marshall, Department Head, at (864)-646-8361, Ext. 2292 or email: rmarshall@tricounty.tec.sc.us

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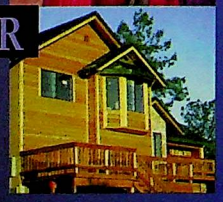
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